

SKATING INTO MATRIMONY.

What a clear, cold day it was! The earth all wrapped in white, sparkling snow—the frozen river gleaming in the distance like a ribbon of steel! How the wind shook the cedar boughs drooping over the stained glass casements of Mr. Arkwright's library—but it could gain no entrance to the pleasant room, with its crimson walls and ruby velvet carpet, and polished grate, heaped high with glowing anthracite! "Tap, tap!" came softly to the door, and Mr. Arkwright looked up from his book.

"Come in!"

"It's only me, sir! I called to see if Miss Ariel would like to drive down to the river and look at the skaters this afternoon!"

"Look at them!" repeated Mr. Arkwright, good-humoredly. Why, she's one of the performers, instead of being a spectator! She went down an hour ago, with Tom Havens!"

"Tom Havens!"

Mr. Felix Fetherbee's whiskered under-jaw dropped—he fingered nervously at his eyeglasses.

"Why yes—Tom's rather handy on a pair of skates, and he's been teaching my daughter. I'm glad you are here, Felix," added Mr. Arkwright, "for to tell the truth, I don't exactly like Ariel to be so much with Mr. Havens. Not but what he's a fine, frank young fellow, but then you know he depends solely on his profession, and—O, well, you understand all these things, Fetherbee!"

"Certainly, sir," said Felix the perfumed. "And I've suspected this long while that you were a little interested in Ariel—"

"Then off to the river with you, quicker than a flash, my boy! Of course you skate?"

"O, yes, sir—that is, I've never tried, but it's easy enough, I don't doubt!"

Mr. Arkwright raised his brows rather doubtfully, but Felix had disappeared. The idea of Ariel Arkwright's skating with Thomas Havens drove him wild!

There they were, in the center of the merry multitude of skaters! Felix recognized them with avengeful pang as he scrambled down the slippery bank—Tom Havens's fur cap and straight active figure—Ariel Arkwright's golden, floating curls and brilliant color!

"Hanged if I don't have some of this fun!" muttered Felix. "Hallo, Dorrner! do you know where a fellow can raise a pair of skates?"

"You may take mine, if you choose," groaned the young man addressed, who was limping toward the shore, rubbing his aching elbows.

"I'm very much obliged to you."

"Oh, not at all!" said Mr. Dorrner, thinking within himself that Felix Fetherbee would not be so very much obliged after he became acquainted with the slippery nature of ice.

"Hallo, Fetherbee!" hailed Havens, in a clear, loud voice, as he shot up to the shore, hand in hand with that dimpled, panting radiant little Ariel. "Are you going to join us?"

"Yes," said Felix, impatiently jerking his straps. "Mr. Arkwright requested me to come down and take charge of Miss Ariel!"

"Take charge of her!" ejaculated the young lady, while she opened his black eyes wide. Indeed it isn't necessary. I don't wish to trouble you, Mr. Fetherbee."

"No trouble at all. What does make these things so shaky?"

"It is because you have not secured them on," said Havens. "Shall I screw them?"

But Felix scornfully rejected the friendly overtures of his rival.

"You'd better just take hold of my hand—I'm afraid you're new to skates!" persisted Tom, as Felix rose tottering to his feet.

"No, I thank you," said Felix, clutching at the shore as those treacherous steel runners walked off of themselves taking his feet with them and landing the rest of him on the ice with an unpleasant shock!

"Oh dear!" said Ariel demurely, "I'm afraid your hurt!"

"Pray let me help you up," said Tom.

"I am—not a bit—hurt!" gasped Felix, spasmodically rubbing the back of his head, as Havens set him skillfully on his feet.

"Now you're all right!" encouraged Tom. "Hallo! there you go again! You're in too great a hurry, Mr. Fetherbee!"

"It isn't me," gasped Felix, hanging to a pine branch in abject terror. "It's those confounded slippery skates. It may be great fun, but I must confess I don't see it."

"Oh, you'll alter your mind soon!" said Tom. "Just see how simple it is!"

Away he glided in marvelous curves and angles, and came up again with sparkling eyes and flushed cheeks.

"Ariel! shall we try it again?"

"Excuse me, sir," said Felix, loftily. "Mr. Arkwright wished that I should skate with Miss Ariel!"

"As she don't purpose skating on the palms of her hands or the back of her head, I don't see that your plan is practicable," said Tom provokingly, as he and Ariel vanished.

"Hang these skates!" said Felix, "they won't stand still! Well, if Tom Havens can scud about in that fashion, I don't see why I can't! Here goes!"

And Felix, rashly desperate, "struck out," as he had seen Havens do. Alas! for our hero—blissfully confident, he came to grief, with his nose prone against the ice.

It is agreeable for any young man to have the damsel of his adoration behold him in a sitting posture on the ice, staring hopelessly around, with his hat knocked in, and his coat-sleeves badly torn! So Fetherbee felt as Ariel shot by him, leaning on Tom Havens' arm and calling out:

"Tell papa I'll be home before dark!"

"Miss Arkwright!" he shouted. "Miss Arkwright!"

No answer—she was gone!

Could he but have seen her, dashing over the ice, still on Tom Havens' protecting arm—under the shadows of Bill promontories—miles flying past like inches! Could he have heard Tom's whisper:

"Courage, love! We are almost there!"

There—but we anticipate.

Sunset glowed redly across the scene, as Felix crawled stiff and sore up the bank.

"O, my head! my bones!" he groaned.

"Take your skates, Dorrner! I shan't borrow 'em again, you may depend."

"Well, where's Ariel?" said Mr. Arkwright, as Felix stumbled into the library.

"I don't know, sir; but one thing I do know—"

The extent of Mr. Fetherbee's knowledge remained a mystery, for at the same moment another door opened and Ariel tripped in, all blushing, followed by Tom the audacious.

"Papa, you will forgive me, I know."

"There's no help for it now," added Tom.

"Eh!" ejaculated Mr. Arkwright.

"Papa, I'm married to Tom."

Then there came a shower of tears—then kisses—and ultimately a free pardon of course. And not until this stage of affairs was reached did they remark the absence of Mr. Fetherbee.

It was just as well, however—since Tom and Ariel had skated into matrimony, his little comedy was played out!

A FUNNY MISTAKE.—Little Herby asked his mother, what "blood relations" meant. She explained to him that it signified near relatives. After thinking a moment, he said, "Then, mother, you must be the bloodiest relation I've got!"

Late Acts of Congress bearing on California.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS.

An Act in relation to the election of representatives to Congress by single districts.

That in each State entitled in the next and any succeeding Congress to more than one representative, the number to which such State is or may be hereafter entitled shall be elected, by districts composed of contiguous territory, equal in number to the number of representatives to which said State may be entitled in the Congress for which said election is held, no one district electing more than one representative: Provided, That the provisions of this act shall not apply to the State of California, so far as it may affect the election of representatives to the thirty-eighth Congress: And provided further, That, in the election of representatives to the thirty-eighth Congress from the State of Illinois, the additional representative allowed to said State by an act entitled "An act fixing the number of the House of Representatives from and after the third of March, eighteen hundred and sixty-three," approved March fourth, eighteen hundred and sixty-two, may be elected by the State at large, and the other thirteen representatives to which the State is entitled by the districts as now prescribed by law in said State, unless the Legislature of said State should otherwise provide before the time fixed by law for the election of representatives therein.

Approved, July 14, 1862.

LIMITS OF NEVADA TERRITORY.

An Act to extend the territorial limits of the Territory of Nevada.

That all that part of the Territory of the United States, included within the following limits, namely: Beginning at the point of intersection of the forty-second degree of north latitude with the thirty-eighth degree of longitude west from Washington; thence running south on the said thirty-eighth degree of longitude, until it intersects the northern boundary line of New Mexico; thence due west to the thirty-ninth degree of longitude west from Washington; thence with said thirty-ninth degree north to the intersection of said forty-second degree of north latitude; thence east with said forty-second degree of north latitude to the place of beginning, be and the same is hereby attached to and made a part of the Territory of Nevada subject to the limitations, restrictions, and provisions of the act organizing the Territory of Nevada.

Approved, July 14, 1862.

EVIDENCE.

1. The law of the State where the Court is held to determine the competency of witnesses.

An Act in relation to the Competency of witnesses, and for other purposes.

That the laws of the State in which the Court shall be held shall be the rules of decision as to the competency of witnesses in the Courts of the United States in trials at common law, in equity, and admiralty.

Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That so much of section twenty-nine of an act entitled "An Act to establish the Judicial Courts of the United States, approved September twenty-four, seventeen hundred and eighty-nine, as requires, in cases punishable with death, twelve petit jurors to be summoned from the county where the offence was committed, be, and the same is hereby repealed.

Approved, July 16, 1862.

FRAUDULENT USE OF POSTAGE STAMPS.

An Act to punish the fraudulent Sale or Use of Postage Stamps.

That any person who shall wilfully remove or cause to be removed from any postage stamp or stamped envelope, the cancelling or defacing marks thereon, with intent to use the same or cause the use of the same the second time, or shall knowingly or wilfully sell or buy such cancelled or restored stamps, or offer the same for sale or give or expose the same to any person for use, or knowingly use the same, or prepare the same with intent for the second use thereof, every such person shall, upon conviction thereof, be adjudged guilty of felony, and shall be punished by imprisonment not exceeding three years, or by fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, by both imprisonment and fine as aforesaid, and one half such fine, when collected, shall be paid to the informer.

Approved, July 16, 1862.

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Such a work which your petitioner has in view cannot be published in this State without an extraordinary outlay, nor have we the materials artist or skill in copper-plate or wood engraving. The work will comprise from 400 to 500 pages, to be handsomely illustrated with colored plates, maps, etc., quarto form. The subscriber will send a complete list of all the associations and companies, especially mining companies.

He goes to Europe for the purpose of seeing all the manufacturing places, machines and utensils; also to the leading mining districts and metallurgical establishments, to acquire from the best sources there the best mode of treating our rich minerals, and lay these several important features before our people through the Mining and Scientific Press, and the work he hereby offers. But the most important subject in his mission is the inducement he will offer to the Europeans of our immensely rich mining fields and agricultural lands, together with the great advantages offered by a liberal and protective government for industrial citizens.

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Respectfully submitted, JULIUS SILVERMITH, December 11, 1862-1f

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